

WATER ALLOCATION PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE DRAFT MISSION STATEMENTS

General Mission

RI Gen. Laws §46-15.7

“Management of the amounts, purposes, timing, locations, rates, and other characteristics of fresh water withdrawals from ground or surface waters...in order to protect the health, safety, and general welfare of the people of the state of Rhode Island, to promote the continued existence, diversity, and health of the state's native wildlife and plant species and communities, and the fair and equitable allocation of the water resource among users and uses, and to insure that long-range rather than short-range considerations remain uppermost.”

Regulated Riparian Model Water Code

“Identify short-term, intermediate and long term actions to allocate the waters of the State among users in a manner that fosters efficient and productive use of the total water supply of the State in a sustainable manner in the satisfaction of economic, environmental, and other social goals, whether public or private, with the availability and utility of water being extended with a view of preventing water from becoming a limiting factor in the general improvement of social welfare.”

WAPAC Subcommittee Working Mission Statement (in progress)

Ensure sustainability of the state’s water resources and the fair and equitable allocation of water among users and uses, considering social economic and environmental goals. The mission will be accomplished by identifying short-term, intermediate and long-term strategies to manage the amounts, purposes, timing, locations, rates, and other characteristics of fresh water withdrawals from the ground and surface waters of the state.

WAPAC Subcommittee Working Mission #2

Management of the amounts, purposes, timing, locations, rates, and other characteristics of fresh water withdrawals from ground or surface waters...in order to protect the health, safety, and general welfare of the people of the state of Rhode Island, to promote the continued existence, diversity, and health of the state's native wildlife and plant species and communities, and the fair and equitable allocation of the water resource among users and uses, and to insure that long-range rather than short-range considerations remain uppermost. This mission will be accomplished by identifying short-term, intermediate and long-term strategies to manage the amounts, purposes, timing, locations, rates, and other characteristics of fresh water withdrawals from the ground and surface waters of the state. In the short term, existing users who are practicing state of the science reduction/conservation, reuse and recycling efforts should be afforded fair share protection.

Committee Missions

Research Committee

Research how other states have approached water allocation, specifically water use registration systems, and make recommendations for Rhode Island.

Registration Committee

Review water use data in Rhode Island by basin and, if warranted, recommend a water use registration system.

Stream Flow Committee

Develop and implement a flow standard that allows for optimum use and encourages sound management practices while being protective of a healthy aquatic ecosystem.

Priority Uses Committee

Produce a set of dynamic criteria that may be used by the Water Resources Board in developing standards for priorities for the uses of the waters of the state. These criteria should be informed by existing state policy, state and federal law and shall be tailored to the degree supportable by existing data as well as to the unique characteristics of watersheds and basins.

Water Rights/Regulatory Authority Committee

Review existing water rights doctrines in the United States, particularly in Rhode Island, and recommend a suitable rights structure for Rhode Island. Clarify the existing regulatory framework of water management in Rhode Island by depicting organizational authority with water use.

Out-of-Basin Transfer Committee

Develop criteria for out-of basin transfers that protect the reasonable needs of water basins.

Water Rates/Fees/Alternatives Committee

Using economic analysis and other means, identify ways that water and waste water rate structures can be modified to better reflect the cost of using water and preserving the resource. Rate structures proposed would encourage conservation and efficient water management, mindful of users' ability to pay. Investigate the use of fees for various strategies to reduce, reuse, or recycle water.

Education Committee

Carry out an education, outreach and public relations program promoting long-range conservation and use of the water resources of the state. Pay particular attention to the needs of local municipalities, water supply districts, and constituencies most likely to be affected by a water allocation program.

Integrated Water/Wastewater Considerations Committee

Develop a marketing plan for wastewater to maximize the efficiency of water use, and wastewater and storm water reuse to meet present and future needs. Focus areas include

wastewater reuse, education, plumbing changes, demonstration projects and financial incentives.

Impact Analysis Committee

Evaluate the social, economic, and environmental impacts of current water supply and use issues in Rhode Island and to assess the impacts of proposed actions.

Joint Advocacy and Funding Committee

Evaluate and recommend legislative strategies and cooperative funding to implement water allocation initiatives.